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16 MR. O'NEIL: Pete O'Neil, 27.

17 MODERATOR LAWSON: Good, thank you.

18 MR. O'NEIL: Good evening, I'm Pete O'Neil.

19 I love up on Sunrise Mountain. I'm part of the new

20 minority here in Las Vegas. 50 percent of us that

21 haven't lived here 10 years. We're foster parents, we

22 have three kids. And it's strange that this project, I

23 think, has brought the community together in ways I

24 don't think, I don't always see. Citizens and

25 community groups, concerned about the future of

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1 Las Vegas, Southern Nevada and its residents have come

2 together tonight. Some booing, some not. And the

3 crisis, what -- it's from the Latin word, "point of

4 decision." And unfortunately, a lot of what we're

5 discussing tonight, a decision was made many years ago.

6 If I was here back in 1987, I'd have been in

7 Washington, D.C. on the steps of the Capitol raising

8 hell, and it wouldn't have been passed, but it was.

9 I don't know if I mentioned too, I'm a

10 candidate for U.S. Congress in the Third District, so

11 that's why I'm really interested, along with my kids,
12 and doing something about this. Somebody laughed, but
13 you know, earlier this evening the politicians that
14 were making a big fuss about this -- you know, I have a
15 2-year-old that has really bad asthma, and here in
16 Las Vegas, it's really hard to treat. And we've had to
17 go to doctors outside the state, and that's a huge
18 health issue right now. We even went to some of the
19 county and city officials. They didn't seem to care
20 about it at all.

21 In the past, the federal government has built
22 some great projects. You know, put a man on the moon,
23 Hoover Dam. Federal funds go to help build normally
24 what we think are good things, you know, new roads,
25 bridges, community centers. Military planes to protect
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1 us. And unfortunately, sometimes also towards nuclear
2 waste and depositing nuclear waste. And then sometimes
3 we can't always trust our government. And you know --
4 but we can't distort things. And this evening, you
5 know, I was going to make fun of it, but it was six
6 security check points we had to jump through tonight
7 listening to Senator Reid.

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8 I will say in the past two months, for
9 information that I've been compiling, I could show you
10 over there, I have got like five phone books from the
11 Department of Energy. They've been very helpful,
12 they've given me everything I needed, and I flunked out
13 of chemistry, so this has been a difficult thing for me
14 to try to get my hands around.

15 I have called people back East, even called
16 some scientists in Europe who are sending me
17 information about recycling. I am waiting for that
18 next week. I will say the Department of Energy for me
19 has given everything I have asked for. They've given
20 me -- their staff has been terrific, always giving me
21 as much information, and one of the things I've noticed
22 in the last couple of weeks is that some of us are
23 demonizing the federal employees, federal staff and
24 scientists working on this project. And as earlier
25 people have said, that's no good. You need to

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1 dialogue. And when you try to make, demonize people
2 that are just doing their job following what was laid
3 out in 1987, it's not going to make things any better.

4 With this said, it's time for us to get with

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5 our eyes open and with as much information and facts as
6 we can find, move forward. Yucca Mountain is being
7 considered because the fact that it's part of the
8 nation's energy needs, in the past 40 years, included
9 nuclear fuel. Our industrial growth over the past four
10 decades was in part fueled by nuclear energy. And as a
11 byproduct over these last 40 years, we are now storing
12 nuclear waste temporarily at all these sites
13 nationwide. It has to be stored somewhere. There is
14 discussions that it could be stored locally, and then
15 recycled, and like I said, the facts, I personally need
16 to do more research. And you can talk to some people
17 and they say hey, it's there, it can happen. You know.
18 We need to do a little bit more research.
19 Close review shows that the biggest threat,
20 though, I feel to Las Vegas, is transportation of waste
21 to Yucca through the valley. That's why if proposed,
22 the O'Neil Las Vegas Valley Protection Act could
23 prevent that. You know, those of us earlier tonight
24 that were booing and stuff, you know, I believe in
25 Santa Claus. But it's when I'm around my children.

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1 And those of you here tonight that can tell me the

2 governmental body that you're going to go to that will
3 reverse this decision, please let me know when I leave
4 tonight, because I'd like to know it. That's the fact,
5 unfortunately.

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6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Public in Nevada's
7 going to stop it, sir.

8 MODERATOR LAWSON: 30 seconds.

9 MR. O'NEIL: One thing I will question that
10 I'm going to submit also though, is when I lived back
11 in New York for a couple of years, I used to go to
12 Grant's Tomb up on the Upper West Side, and it was at
13 that time over 100 years old and it was leaking and
14 really in bad repair. I used to ask the federal
15 rangers about the facility, and I'd say, "When are you
16 guys going to make the repairs?" They'd be like, "We
17 don't have the money to make the repairs." So in this
18 research, in this information I have looked over, it
19 has to be rebuilt every 100 years. So I just wanted to
20 know if there's funds guaranteed to the state to
21 guarantee that those -- in 100 years that federal
22 government doesn't have the budget to do it, that we
23 can do it.
24 I'll just close with a couple of quick

25 things. You know, I think some of the statements made

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1 earlier this evening maybe riled us up and gets us
2 excited. Nobody wants nuclear waste, but I don't think
3 when we take that tact, it furthers our cause. We need
4 to get our hands around this and be part of the
5 decision-making process. Those -- as much as we want
6 to think that Yucca Mountain isn't going to happen,
7 it's going to take an act of Congress to stop it. And
8 then any safety precautions will also have to take an
9 act of Congress. Main issue will be transportation.
10 When you take 40 years of waste, put it on the roads
11 and have it go through Las Vegas, that's going to be
12 dangerous, so we need to do some bypass roads, we need
13 to do guaranteed a track system and compensation. I
14 have had some people call me the last couple of days
15 and say it's horrible we would ask for compensation.
16 It happens. We're entitled. It's under the agreement,
17 and we need to look into that.